

# The Baptist Record

JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION

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## Churches cannot, must not avoid scrutiny in harassment, abuse issues, or hiring practices

By Paul G. Jones II

Churches are not exempt from laws regarding sexual harassment, abuse, and in some cases, discrimination. Employment issues should also be matters of concern for churches, associations, and their agencies and institutions.

Many churches facing lawsuits over these matters are discovering the consequences of litigation. Besides astronomical costs, the reputation and ministries of the church are damaged.

### Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment violates biblical morality long before it violates civil law. According to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), "unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitutes sexual harassment when:

- submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment,
- submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such individuals, or
- such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment."

An employer is responsible for sexual harassment by agents and employees regardless of whether the employer knew about it. The employer can often be exempt from liability if the employer took "immediate and appropriate corrective action."

Sexual harassment can be verbal or physical and can involve co-workers, a supervisor and employee, or even a third party on the employer's property if such conduct is known and not prevented.

For example, if a "friendly" repair person sexually harasses a church staff member, a church could be liable if it fails to take corrective action.

The church is responsible for providing an environment that is not hostile for employees. A hostile workplace can be any point of employment that does not intentionally protect employees from physical, emotional, or verbal harassment.

Under federal law, males and females can be either perpetrator or victim. Moreover, an employee does not have to suffer economic harm to prevail in a sexual harassment lawsuit.

Churches need to develop written sexual harassment policies. A clear, written statement approved by the church can give indication of the church's intention to confront harassment and take corrective action.

When a charge is made, it should be treated seriously, investigated promptly, handled confidentially, corrected appropriately, and documented in writing.

### Sexual Abuse

Sexual misconduct in the church takes many forms. Misconduct has occurred in counseling sessions, day-care centers, and church-related activities. There have been numerous charges against churches and their employees for child sexual abuse, outrageous conduct, negligent hiring, and statutory rape.

Child sexual abuse is a problem that permeates every segment of society. Staff members and volunteer leaders have been

convicted of child sexual abuse and churches have faced legal action because of the actions of its representatives — whether paid or voluntary.

A church cannot be naive about the reality and existence of child sexual abuse. Staff members and leaders should be thoroughly educated about such abuse. A church should screen all volunteers, as well as staff members, who will have any contact with children.

While it may seem awkward at first, every children's and youth leader should be asked to complete a written application which seeks references to be carefully checked.

Many churches have adopted a "two-adult rule" which mandates that one person will never be alone with a child at any time while the child is on church property.

Likewise, a "twelve-month rule" is suggested by many experts. The twelve-month rule states that no person will be placed in a program for children or youth for at least one year after they join the church.

Such rules can be used to indicate a good faith attempt to protect all persons under the care of the church, and since the purpose is to protect the innocent, every church should create such protection as a witness to its purpose and program.

Charges of sexual abuse also arise between adults. Abuse may occur during counseling sessions when the counselee is deemed vulnerable. Sexual abuse by professional ministers can lead to such charges as breach of fiduciary duty, seduction, alienation of affection, outrageous conduct, negligent supervision, vicarious liability, and the seeking of punitive damages.

### Negligent Hiring

Negligent hiring, retention, and supervision are charges often brought against an employer.

The possibility of negligent hiring places a duty on employers to use responsible care in the selection of employees. It is a claim against an employer for failing to properly and adequately investigate a prospective staff member or other employee.

Similar to negligent hiring is negligent supervision which normally means the employer does not exercise sufficient care in supervising a worker. Clear lines of authority and responsibility, ongoing evaluation, and prompt response to all allegations are means of responsible supervision.

Performance should always be within the parameters of the written job description of all employees that any responsible church would require.

A charge of negligent retention can arise if an employer retains an employee who it knows is unfit for the employment position. The concept of negligent retention places a duty to investigate and act pursuant to its finding.

In some jurisdictions, "hiring" has been expanded to mean selection of volunteer workers. Thus, volunteers as well as employees should be subject to thorough investigation and supervision.

A church should take several actions if a sexual misconduct charge is made:

- Respond promptly to any and all allegations to determine the truth.
- Contact the church's attorney and insurance carrier as soon as possible after the allegation is made.
- Comply with all state reporting requirements.
- If the allegation is supported by sufficient evidence, relieve the accused of all church duties.
- Do not ignore the supposed victim.
- Do not defend the indefensible.
- Manage honestly the publicity surrounding an accusation, remembering always that the work and witness of the church must not be compromised in any attempt to "look clean."

### Employment Discrimination

Because of the U.S. Constitution's First Amendment guarantee of freedom of religion, courts have rarely intervened in the "employment" relationship between a minister and his church.

For the same reason, ministers who are serving churches generally are not covered

by federal, state, or local laws prohibiting employment discrimination.

Ministers are normally considered under an "employment-at-will doctrine." The basic idea of this doctrine is that employers may terminate employees for any reason and likewise employees may quit without providing a reason.

The exceptions to this doctrine can be employment contracts, definite application of employment law, and exceptions created by courts under such concepts as implied contract theories and exceptions to public policy.

Churches should be aware that they may be responsible for portions of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which prohibits discrimination in employment with respect to compensation, terms, conditions, or privileges of employment on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin.

Title VII allows churches and religious bodies to discriminate on the basis of religion. Moreover, employers may discriminate on the basis of religion, sex, or national origin when one of those factors is a bona fide occupational qualification (BFOQ), which is reasonably necessary to the normal operation of the employer's business.

Under present law and court rulings, a church can decide to hire only members of its denomination for any position. In a landmark case in 1987 (*Bishop vs. Amos*), the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that religious organizations could discriminate on the basis of religion even in their "secular activities."

Title VII also generally permits educational institutions controlled by a religious organization to discriminate on the basis of religion. Thus, a church day school normally can legally hire only persons of its denomination as teachers.

As with all legal matters, a church should secure an attorney prior to addressing any employment-related matters.

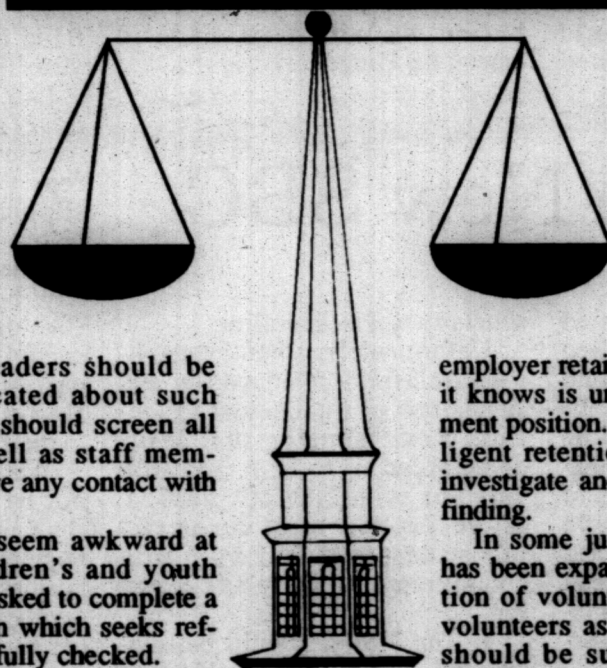
The best way to avoid legal problems is to always act ethically responsible and treat all persons as Christ treated them. Do not bring personal problems or prejudices to church. Encourage all employees and members to report sexual harassment, abuse, or discrimination immediately.

Avoid comments which imply prejudice or discrimination. Treat all staff persons fairly regardless of race, color, national origin, age, or sex. Finally, evaluate all church policies for fairness, completeness, and accountability.

Materials on these issues can be obtained from the Christian Action Commission (CAC) of the Mississippi Baptist Convention by writing to CAC, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Telephone: (601) 968-3800.

Jones is executive director, CAC.

### Church and State



Part 3  
of a series



## EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

Guy Henderson

## Houston and beyond

The meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention in Houston is not likely to be the biggest nor the best, but it will be different. Houston in general and Ed Young, SBC president, specifically, are going the second mile to make messengers welcome.

The eyes of several thousand Baptists will be on the SBC; but hardly will the eyes of Texas, nor will the eyes of the world. Fearfully, we have forfeited that position.

Young's desire of putting "some heart and some soul and some real unction into our (SBC) convention experience" is a noble wish, but the methods could be questioned.

In previous conventions, we've had great preaching, presidential addresses, flag-waving, missionaries from 123 countries, toe-tapping music, plus videos and magnificent choirs. To top all the previous years, we will have to pull out all stops — and apparently that is the plan.

What is irreverently being called "Ed's Extravaganza" will satisfy any desire for celebrities, musical thirst, great entertainment, and inspiration. Nashville, Branson, and Hollywood will be doing re-

runs that week. The main show will be in Houston.

Seriously folks, it's going to be big... and good.

You may be breathless part of the time, but someone will have to give the reports and elect the officers. There will be some big issues before the messengers.

The WMU-SBC relationship discussion will be a nail-biter. The SBC has said to the WMU, "Be 'hard-wired' into the SBC or leave." The WMU has said, "We will not give up our auxiliary status, nor will we leave." How will it end? Will there be a compromise?

Bear in mind the SBC has not lost a battle since 1979; the WMU has never lost one. Here is a fervent hope the SBC will work out a solution. We need the WMU auxiliary for an effective mission program.

The Home Mission Board's report on Freemasonry will be given Wednesday morning. The report is basically a plea for acceptance, leaving membership in the fraternity to a matter of "personal conscience." Would we could accept this without the expected

emotional upheaval.

The proposed change in the constitution will be up for the second and final approval. This will dis-fellowship churches which "affirm, approve, or endorse homosexual behavior." Most Baptists are dead-set against homosexuality, but do we have to weave it into our constitution? Will we have to do the same for abortion next year?

Add to all these issues the huge social problems in health, jobs, the family, racism, and the disintegration of morality in the nation. The resolutions committee will be kept busy, and oratorical clouds will hang heavy.

Fading fast into the background is Bold Mission Thrust and our one-time desire to see that every person in the world hear the gospel by the year 2000. Feuding adds little to evangelism and missions; we really don't have time for it.

Fifty years from now, some scholars will blow the dust from the minutes of the 1993 SBC convention. What will be the contribution we will have made to extend the Kingdom?

"GO!" (MK.16:15)...THE MISSION IMPERATIVE



"DECLARE HIS GLORY AMONG THE NATIONS, HIS MARVELOUS WORKS AMONG ALL PEOPLE!" — PSA. 96:3 (RSV)

## School loyalty

Walter Rogers is an 82-year-old black man who has worked at Blue Mountain College for 43 years or more.

Last winter, when snow and ice covered the north Mississippi campus, Walter tied sacking and rope to his shoes, and tread the slippery slopes to check on his beloved school.

Others didn't have to come that day, but Walter felt like he did. President E. Harold Fisher was careful to speak to Walter on graduation day. Good presidents always acknowledge the Walters in their lives.

Walter never took Speech 101, but he speaks to more students than most. He didn't major in business, but he has made it his business to be pleasant. He is not numbered among the alumni, but his loyalty to Blue Mountain is

unquestioned. He never drove Miss Daisy, but he and Hoke have a kinship.

A faculty member has declared Walter to be the most willing worker on the mountain. "He recalls working on a building on campus in 1928 and even now can outwork most of us."

On May 9, Walter attended another graduation. He doesn't know much about caps and robes, but he knows another group of freshmen will be coming soon and he wants to have things ready.

Others were there to speak to the graduates, but Walter preached the best sermon. Loyalty always stands head and shoulders above the crowd. Students get a great education from the faculty, but they could well have learned the best lessons from Walter.

— GH

## Guest opinion...

## More features of the New SBC

By Russell H. Dilday

## Part 3

Recently, with a suddenness that caught even political experts unawares, the structures of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union were radically altered, reminding us that in his providence, God can surprise us all with sudden, unpredictable changes in his world. That's one reason we must not give up on the Southern Baptist Convention. Whatever interpretation you give to the recent struggle for denominational control, we must remember that the Lord of history is able to intervene in our situation with changes beyond our boldest imagination.

I believe there will emerge from the dust of the controversy a reshaped and hopefully stronger denomination, a New Southern Baptist Convention (NSBC). And because of the possibility of God's unpredictable intervention, the new form could surface sooner than we think. Many of you have indicated that, like me, you want to turn your attention away from the past strife and focus your efforts toward shaping the NSBC of the 21st century.

In the last article, I suggested two essential aspects of a renewed convention: 1. The NSBC should preserve the denominational solidarity of the past, but should be less afraid of responsible trans-denominational networks and coalitions. 2. The NSBC should refuse to use politics, power, and pressure tactics and adopt instead spiritual weapons such as persuasion and proclamation in its service for Christ.

Here are some others:

3. The NSBC should welcome and encourage believing intellectualism and reverent scholarship.

It should champion a scholarly, thoughtful, conservative, biblical theology which aggressively engages secular modernity without obscurantism. Southern Baptist seminaries are in a good position to take the lead in this effort to put faith and reason in proper perspective.

The secular philosophy which dominates so much of society today may have grown up not so much from a conspiracy of atheistic educators and political leaders as from the negligence of conservatives who surrendered the

scholarly turf to liberalism.

Unfortunately, some evangelicals are afraid of education and suspicious of intellectual reflection. Remembering that Jesus commanded us to love God with "all our mind" (Matt. 22:37), future Baptists must counteract this widespread fear by a firm commitment to study and learning.

4. The NSBC should be non-creedal, but equally willing to articulate biblical doctrines with greater precision, taking more pains to think out and express convictions.

Southern Baptists have been described as "simple biblicists." The NSBC should maintain its aversion to man-made creeds, its depreciation of fallen human reason, and its unshamed allegiance to the authority of Scripture. However, we should give more attention as "constructive conservatives" to theological reflection.

5. The NSBC should seek a healthier balance between the personal and social implications of the gospel of Jesus Christ, improving on the steps we have already to coordinate evangelism

and social ministry.

The neo-evangelical model which emerged after World War II helped the old evangelicalism realize that conservative theology with its call to aggressive evangelism does not exclude equally aggressive efforts to meet humanity's social needs.

The NSBC of tomorrow should understand that legitimate concerns for the eternal salvation of the lost need not conflict with, but should actually complement and inform, equally legitimate concerns for human suffering and injustice in the here and now.

6. The NSBC should continue to rely on cooperation as the rela-

tional glue that holds the convention together in its primary task of obeying the Great Commission.

It may be expressed in new organizational patterns, but cooperation should remain as the distinctive method of convention work. We must be willing to include all like-minded Baptists in cooperative efforts to accomplish the overwhelming tasks our Lord has given us, realizing that within the boundaries of our common theological convictions, "Baptist diversity" is not only possible, but desirable.

Dilday is president, Southwestern Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas.

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## Former president visits WMU

Former U.S. President Jimmy Carter and his wife, Rosalynn (center), paid an impromptu after-hours visit to the Southern Baptist Woman's Missionary Union office in Birmingham, Ala. Dellanna O'Brien (right), national WMU executive director, gave the Carters a brief tour of the building. O'Brien was joined by her husband, Bill (left). (WMU photo by Dan Bryan)

## Fellowship OKs new constitution, budget

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (BP) — The Cooperative Baptist Fellowship concluded its third annual assembly May 13-15 with a new constitution, a \$5 million budget, and 22 missionaries "blessed," but, apparently, not as a new denomination.

The CBF is an organization of moderate Southern Baptists critical of the conservative leadership of the Southern Baptist Convention.

About 5,000 people registered for the meeting, with "Faith and Freedom in Christ" as its theme, at the Birmingham/Jefferson Civic Center in downtown Birmingham, Ala., but between 6,000-7,000 came the first night to hear former U.S. President Jimmy Carter "cast his lot with the CBF." The figures are about the same as the CBF drew in Fort Worth, Texas, last year although organizers in Birmingham had hoped for 10,000.

Carolyn Weatherford Crumpler, wife of a retired Cincinnati pastor and former executive director of the SBC Woman's Missionary Union, was voted moderator-elect, which means she will be named moderator next year. Assuming the moderator's post for 1993-94, the CBF's equivalent to a national president, was Hardy Clemons, pastor of First Church, Greenville, S.C.

The CBF had to adopt a new constitution or ratify the initial document voted in 1991 because of a "sunset clause" in the previous document. The new document

does contain most of the language used by denominations.

For the first three annual meetings of the CBF, anyone attending could, and was urged to, register.

But now membership in the CBF "will be limited to Baptist individuals and Baptist churches who contribute annually to the ministries and operations of the Fellowship." A church is counted as a CBF contributor even if one family designates a portion of its offering for the CBF budget — and all members of that church become eligible to vote at the CBF General Assembly. That will require a credentials committee, officials said, which will be in place at the 1994 meeting in Greensboro, N.C.

A revamped Coordinating Council, with 69 members representing several states and regional clusters, will meet three times a year following the 1994 assembly, and act on behalf of the CBF, much as the Executive Committee does for the SBC.

A vote to approve a \$5,080,000 budget for 1994 included formal approval of a 1993 budget of \$3,699,500. The CBF anticipates receipts of \$9.5 million this year, and \$12.5 million in 1994 but nearly \$6 million this year and \$7.5 million in 1994 will go to SBC agencies or other Baptist causes.

Of the CBF's portion of the budgets, most will go to support the group's global missions efforts: \$2.7 million in 1993 and \$3.8 million in 1994.

## Young names Credentials Committee members

HOUSTON (BP) — Members of the Credentials Committee and Tellers Committee for the June 15-17 Houston meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention have been named by SBC president and Houston pastor H. Edwin Young.

The Mississippi member on the Credentials Committee is Glennwood Mathis, layperson, First Church, Beaumont.

Keith Thrash, pastor, Russell Church, Meridian, is the Mississippi member on the Tellers Committee.

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## Fellowship welcomes former president, sets year's agenda

By Mark Wingfield and Greg Warner

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (ABP) — With a ringing endorsement from former President Jimmy Carter, the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship commissioned its first missionaries and adopted a permanent constitution and bylaws May 13-15.

About 5,100 people registered for the Fellowship's annual general assembly in the Birmingham-Jefferson Civic Center in Birmingham, Ala. But between 6,000-7,000 people were present to hear Carter during the first of two evening sessions.

At a missions service the second night, a commissioning ceremony was held for the Fellowship's first 25 missionaries — most serving in Europe and all appointed in the last 16 months.

Everyone in attendance had a chance to embrace one of the missionaries with a word of affirmation, a hug or a prayer. From virtually every seat, people stood and filled the aisles to touch the missionaries, to speak a word of affirmation, or to whisper a prayer. Tears flowed and smiles passed during the highly emotional ceremony.

Among those commissioned were Bert and Debbie Ayers, the first Fellowship missionaries who are not former employees of the Foreign Mission Board. The Fellowship's other overseas workers all resigned from the Foreign Mission Board, most in protest of the FMB's more conservative direction.

The Ayers and their four children, all from Gainesville, Ga., soon will be sent to work as agricultural missionaries in Albania.

Keith Parks, former FMB president and now missions coordinator for the Fellowship, noted the importance of the Ayerses appointment. "There is something awesome about sending out a first new family without previous missionary experience," he said.

Later, in a response to an invitation from Parks, 33 men and women walked to the front of the auditorium to say God was calling them to be Fellowship missionaries. Some of them likely will be among the 20 new missionaries the Fellowship plans to appoint by the end of the year.

Former President Carter referred to the 14-year-old division within the SBC that eventually led to the Fellowship's formation by moderates, who said they were being excluded by SBC conservatives.

In a breakfast meeting with about 400 people the next morning, Carter recounted his own pil-

grimage that led him to join the Fellowship. He said the moment he knew something was wrong came in 1979, after Tennessee pastor Adrian Rogers was elected as the first of a string of conservative SBC presidents.

Carter said he invited Rogers to meet with him at the White House. Carter recalled that after a cordial visit and photo session, Rogers said, "Mr. President, I hope you will give up your secular humanism and return back to Christianity."

That comment shocked him, Carter said. The encounter convinced him his own "deep beliefs were different from those being mandated" by the large-church pastors who were coming to leadership in the SBC.

In each of his appearances during the Fellowship, Carter said Baptists should not force a uniformity of belief on others.

"When there is a definition of what is a proper person, a proper Baptist, a proper American, we are violating the basic principles of what we believe," he said. "When we enforce uniformity on other people, it saps their freedom."

Carter praised the Fellowship for upholding the Baptist principles he believes in — the autonomy of the local church, total separation of church and state, and the priesthood of believers.

Yet Carter warned against being critical of SBC leaders with different views. He urged the Fellowship to follow the example of Woman's Missionary Union, which earlier this year adopted a plan to cooperate with all Southern Baptists, as well as other missions-minded Christians.

Carter praised WMU for attempting to unite Baptists through missions rather than divide them over theology and politics. "They are not casting aside anyone who wants to support missions overseas," he said.

The president asked the Fellowship to embrace women not only as WMU members, but as ministers and deacons in local churches. In the breakfast session, both Carter and his wife, Rosalynn, spoke to that issue again.

"Women should be able to fill all the positions in the church," Rosalynn Carter said. She recalled her disappointment in the early 1980s when her own church voted against ordaining women as deacons. "I don't think there should be any distinction," she added. "People are people."

One anticipated test of the Fel-

lowship's diversity never surfaced during the three-day meeting. Some observers predicted Fellowship participants would argue over homosexuality after Cecil Sherman issued a statement in April denouncing the gay lifestyle.

Although Sherman's statement upset homosexual supporters, the issue did not surface during the meeting.

The Fellowship's business sessions produced not conflict but increasing signs of permanence for the two-year-old organization. The Fellowship adopted a permanent constitution and bylaws, set guidelines for membership, and made some changes in its funding plans.

Sherman reported that 900 churches now channel some funds through the Fellowship, up from 400 in 1992. An additional 3,000 individuals contribute directly to the organization rather than through their churches.

Sherman said the Fellowship is expected to receive \$9.5 million in contributions from churches and individuals in 1993. While some of that income will be channeled to SBC and non-SBC agencies, approximately \$3.7 million will be retained for the Fellowship's own causes — mostly missions.

Participants adopted a 1993 budget to spend that estimated \$3.7 million, and approved a \$5 million budget for 1994.

Sherman said Fellowship contributors are targeting an ever-larger percentage of their gifts for Fellowship causes and away from the SBC — a five-fold increase in two years. "I want you to feel good about what you are doing," he said.

He urged participants not to lament the fact that the SBC agencies they supported for years are now under the control of fundamentalists. "Somebody else got the property; we got the principles," Sherman said, adding, "We got the better deal."

"Our job is to teach the principles," he said.

The three-day meeting included a variety of speakers and breakout sessions. The 60 small-group sessions offered everything from information about the Fellowship to worship aids, help for parenting, and one session where meeting-weary Baptists could simply sit and listen to music.

Wingfield is news director, Kentucky WESTERN RECORDER; Warner is editor, Associated Baptist Press.





## Campers on Mission spring rally

Among those attending the north area spring rally of Mississippi Campers on Mission were (left to right): Phil Vanderhagen, secretary, Betty Vanderhagen, treasurer, both of Biloxi; James Ray of Grenada, president; Red Worrell of Ackerman, vice president; G.A. McCoy of Picayune, chaplain; and Euel Nelson of Monticello, musician. The rally was held April 23-25 at the Oxbow R.V. Park near Grenada. Mattie Ray of Grenada is coordinator for the north area; Katherine Heranney of Hollandale is secretary. (Daily Sentinel-Star photo by Russell Hood)

## State natives to serve on Fellowship council

By Don McGregor

Jean Daniel, of First Church, Starkville, has been elected to the national Coordinating Council of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship. She was nominated in the national meeting in Birmingham, Ala., May 13 to 15, and subsequently elected by the national body.

Daniel will fill the unexpired term of Jean (Mrs. Marvin) Bond of Starkville. The Bonds will return to their former mission field of Hong Kong in August, where Marvin Bond will be the volunteer construction engineer for a new Baptist seminary.

Paul and Margie Thibodeaux, missionaries newly appointed by the Fellowship, will live in the Bond's home in Starkville during a furlough year from their former mission field of Eastern Europe. In their new assignment they will work with the European Baptist Federation.

Other national Coordinating Council members from Mississippi are Susan Paynter from North-

minster Church, Jackson, and John McGraw of First Church, Laurel.

Paul Thibodeaux addressed the Mississippi Fellowship meeting. He said concerning his resignation from the Foreign Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, "The company changed. I could no longer support the company." He was an SBC missionary to Eastern Europe for 11 years.

Jon Doler, pastor of First Church, Leland, was the moderator for the Mississippi Fellowship meeting in the absence of Gene Triggs, the elected moderator. Doler said, "The Cooperative Baptist Fellowship of Mississippi is not a political organization." He added, "We believe in the autonomy of the church, of the state convention, and of the Southern Baptist Convention. We have no intention of bringing politics into the Mississippi Baptist Convention arena."

McGregor is editor emeritus, BAPTIST RECORD.

## Religious liberty bill passes House without resistance

WASHINGTON (BP) — The Religious Freedom Restoration Act, plagued by opposition on several points during much of its nearly three-year history, passed without a whimper of resistance when it finally received a floor vote in Congress.

The House of Representatives OK'd RFRA, H.R. 1308, by voice vote May 11. It was the first time either house of Congress had voted on the legislation since its introduction in mid-1990.

The Senate Judiciary Committee

had approved its version of the bill, S. 578, by a 15-1 vote five days earlier. It is uncertain when RFRA will be considered by the full Senate but indications are it could be before the end of May. President Bill Clinton has endorsed the legislation.

"This is a tremendous step in the right direction and we look forward to the time when RFRA has become the law of the land," said Richard Land, executive director of the Christian Life Commission.

# SBC conflict, Masonic issue cutting into seminary gifts

By Toby Druin

FORT WORTH, Texas (ABP) — More than a decade of denominational conflict and "disruptive changes" at some Southern Baptist Convention institutions are making donors wary of investing their money in those institutions, according to the president of Southwestern Seminary.

A case in point, says Russell Dilday: the current flap between Southern Baptists and the Masonic Lodge may have cost Southwestern a major gift of between \$3 million and \$6 million.

Dilday recently told a group of Dallas pastors that many donors or potential donors are asking how they can retrieve their money if Southwestern is "negatively affected" by "fundamentalists."

"I expressed concern to the men in Dallas and to other groups to whom I have spoken that raising money in the last five to seven years has become increasingly difficult because of denominational conflict or tension," Dilday said in a telephone interview with the Baptist Standard of Texas.

Fundamental-conservatives, who began to dominate the Southern Baptist Convention in 1979, have solidified their control of convention boards over the last few years, and administrative leadership of many institutions and agencies has been replaced.

Such "disruptive changes," Dilday said, "have resulted in great anxiety and frustration by donors

who are asked to place their money in our institutions."

"Donors are asking ways they can take their money back if the institution is negatively affected by fundamentalists — the term they use," said Dilday. "They ask if exclusions can be written into a trust agreement that lets them redirect the money if the president is fired."

The dispute over Masons has complicated one highly significant gift to the seminary, Dilday noted. He declined to give details but said the gift of between \$3 and \$6 million had been delayed and "possibly withdrawn" because of the Masonic conflict.

Druin is associate editor, Texas BAPTIST STANDARD.

## Southern should train women for all roles, Honeycutt says

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (ABP) — Whether or not churches are calling women as pastors, Southern Seminary should be training women for whatever roles God has called them to, the seminary's outgoing president said May 14 in direct contradiction of the views of his successor.

"A local congregation is free to call whom it will as a minister," Honeycutt said. "Does not Almighty God have as much freedom to call whom he will?"

In one of his last addresses to alumni, Roy Honeycutt hinted at the despair he has felt in the seminary's transfer of power. But he stopped short of directly criticizing President-elect Al Mohler or the conservative trustee board who elected Mohler to succeed Honeycutt after his retirement July 31.

But, he said, there should be "no gender distinction" in the community of God. "God's spirit may empower anyone and everyone to fulfill a prophetic role."

The thrust of Honeycutt's message was two-fold: advice that the grieving seminary community should move beyond despair to hope, and a declaration that the seminary is in excellent condition as he prepares to turn over leadership.

"We can live on the other side of despair. There is an afterward," he said in apparent reference to the pain many moderate alumni are feeling at the school's new fundamental-conservative direction.

Many alumni who thought of the seminary as a Garden of Eden now see it as being "East of Eden,"

Honeycutt said in reference to a John Steinbeck novel.

In an apparent attempt to hold his successor accountable for the health of the seminary, Honeycutt talked about "driving down a stake" to mark the school's health as he leaves.

"We commit to our successors an institutional mystique and image of which we have been stewards," he said.

Honeycutt cited the school's accreditation standing, "quality faculty," student body, healthy financial condition, sizeable endowment, and good physical plant as notches on the stake.

"I want the record clear that of this date, May of 1993, Southern Seminary is a healthy institution," he declared.

## Record names summer, fall quarter Sunday School commentary writers

Two pastors and a laywoman have been selected by the Baptist Record to serve as Sunday School lesson commentary writers for the



Rathel

last two quarters of 1993. Commentaries by the new writers will begin publication with the July 1 issue of the state newspaper.

Mark Rathel will write lesson commentaries for the Life and Work series. A native of Florida, Rathel has been pastor of Bay Vista Church, Biloxi, since March 1989. He also has been pastor of Old Hebron Church, New Hebron; Berwick Church, Liberty; and First Church, Springfield, La.

He has written for the Bible Book Series Youth Teacher's Book and The Biblical Illustrations

tor. He holds a bachelor's degree from William Carey College, Hattiesburg, and master of divinity and doctor of the theology degrees



O'Brien

from New Orleans Seminary. He and his wife Angela have two sons.

Michael O'Brien, pastor of First Church, Lexington, will write commentaries for the Uniform series.

Prior to moving to Lexington in 1982, O'Brien was pastor of churches in Tennessee and Louisiana. Active in denominational life, he has served two terms on the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board and was a member of the 1985 MBC Tellers Committee.

A graduate of International Seminary, Plymouth, Fla., he also holds associate degrees from

Holmes Community College and New Orleans Seminary, and is a student at Mississippi College, Clinton, working toward a bachelor's degree in religion. He and his wife Nita have five grown children.



Merritt

Jewel P. Merritt will write commentaries for the Bible Book series. A native of Tyler-town, she is a

member of First Church, Jackson, where she and her husband James teach a couples Sunday School class.

A retired public school teacher, Merritt is a graduate of Mississippi College, Clinton, where she received bachelor of arts, master of education, and education specialist degrees. The Merritts have two sons and three grandchildren.



# Stewardship releases list of top 100 givers

NASHVILLE (BP) — First Church, Orlando, Fla., is the top church in total giving to the Southern Baptist Convention's Cooperative Program for the second straight year, according to a Stewardship Commission study.

James Powell, Stewardship Commission executive vice president in charge of Cooperative Program promotion, has conducted the study since 1989.

One statistic in the study poses ongoing concern: the 9.19% average among all SBC churches for CP giving has dropped for the sixth consecutive year, from 10.52% in 1987 to 10.32% in 1988, 10.16% in 1989, 9.84% in 1990, and 9.53% in 1991. Powell noted that reasons for the decline include a recessive economic climate in the U.S., more competition for mission dollars, SBC or state convention controversy, and the increase in hands-on and local mission projects.

According to the study, the top 10 churches in total CP giving were:

—No. 1: First, Orlando, Fla., \$931,224; 13.9% of undesignated gifts through the CP;

—No. 2: First, Amarillo,

Texas, \$664,227; 18.7% to CP;

—No. 3: First, Midland, Texas, \$597,472, 16.8% to CP;

—No. 4: Bellevue, suburban Memphis, \$576,102, 5.5% to CP;

—No. 5: First, Jackson, \$513,306, 9.3% to CP;

—No. 6: Champion Forest, Houston, \$484,706, 9.9% to CP;

—No. 7: North Phoenix, Phoenix, \$425,545, 8.1% to CP;

—No. 8: Broadmoor, Jackson, \$424,170, 21.2% to CP;

—No. 9: Shades Mountain, Birmingham, Ala., \$424,037, 10.3% to CP;

—No. 10: Broadmoor, Shreveport, La., \$415,137, 14.6% to CP.

The Stewardship Commission study found four churches in the top 20 that gave 20% or more of their members' undesignated gifts to the CP in 1992: Broadmoor, Jackson, 21.2%; Severns Valley, Kentucky's Severns Valley Association, 21.8%; and First, Crossett, Ark., 30%.

Other Mississippi churches among the CP's top 100 giving 20% or more of their undesignated gifts in 1992 were: First, Brandon; Calvary, Tupelo; and First, Columbus.

## Pascagoula's Berger is new Lebanon DOM

The Lebanon Association has elected George Berger as director of missions, effective June 1. For the past 11 years, Berger has served as pastor of Calvary Church, Pascagoula. He follows Joel Dillard Ray, who served 32 years as Lebanon's director of missions. Berger currently serves on the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board and is a member of the disaster relief committee of the board.

A native of Louisiana, Berger is a graduate of William Carey College, New Orleans Seminary, and Clinton Theological Seminary in Michigan. He has also received

post-doctoral credit from Southwestern Seminary, Nicholls State University, and Southeastern Louisiana University.

Former pastors include First Church, Sumrall, and Indian Hill Church, Greene Association.

Berger is married to the former Jo Ann Patton, a native of Purvis. They have two grown daughters.



Berger

## Maxwell leaves MBCB, heads for Tennessee

William Maxwell, director of accounting and personnel services for the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, has been elected to, and accepted a position with, the Tennessee Baptist Convention.

Beginning July 16, Maxwell, 32, will become director of the central administrative division for the TBC in Brentwood. He will handle accounting, information services, and facilities management. This is a new position, merging the jobs of director of accounting and business manager.



Maxwell

Maxwell, employed by the MBCB since 1986, previously was an accounting assistant with the Kentucky Baptist Convention, 1983-86; was minister of youth at Tunnel Hill Church in Georgia, 1982-83; and was campus minister intern for the Baptist Student Union of Dayton Junior College in Georgia, 1982-83.

Maxwell is a graduate of Georgia College, Milledgeville. He earned a master of divinity degree from Southern Seminary, Louisville, Ky., and a master of business administration degree from the Elise School of Management at Millsaps College.

A deacon and Sunday School teacher at First Church, Jackson, Maxwell is married to the former Faith Chance of Jackson.

Thursday, May 20, 1993



## Horses delight children

Young people from across the state were the recipients of a mass volunteer effort at the Mississippi State Fairgrounds in Jackson April 28-30. The annual Horses for the Handicapped program provided horseback rides, a petting zoo (above, right), go-cart (right), wagon, and miniature train rides, shooting gallery (below, right), and space walk for the entertainment of about 1,300 handicapped children. Terry Savell, youth minister at First Church, Byram, "checked out the scene" while helping to man the petting zoo. She wants to bring her youth group to volunteer at the event next year. Below left, Chad Whitworth (left), member of First, Byram, Marc Mathews, and Savell (right), hold animals from the petting zoo. "It's so sweet to see these kids with the animals," she said. "Some of them have never even petted an animal before." Ann Miller, 44, of Jackson, has coordinated obtaining animals for the petting zoo for 12 years. She

was "rooked into it" by her friend Kim Sullivan, long-time volunteer and member of First, Jackson. Miller said seeing the kids makes her own handicap seem small, and "makes you thankful." Approximately 150 volunteers are needed each day of the event, 6:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m., to help with an average of 500 kids on high attendance days. Jackson-area restaurants donate food for volunteers, which is served by the Madison County Fire Department. Other groups which give their time are area 4-H clubs, and the Madison-Ridgeland Academy's National Honor Society and Fellowship of Christian Athletes. Coordinator Aileen Maldonado of the Humane Society of South Mississippi said the concept originally began as a pet therapy program and was later incorporated as Horses for Handicapped and Therapy Pets, Inc. To volunteer your group with the program, call Maldonado at (601) 863-2489 or 864-1946. (Photos by Shannon T. Simpson)



## Missing Yazoo pastor located in Ala.

Missing Yazoo City pastor Jim Everett, 41, surfaced in Montgomery, Ala., on Tuesday, May 11, exactly two weeks after he disappeared while en route to visit his mother at a nursing home in Meridian.

Details are sketchy, and calls to the Everett home have not been returned. News media reports indicated that Everett arrived back in Yazoo City on May 12.

Yazoo City Police Detective Wade Woods, assigned to the Everett case, said his department is not involved in the investigation.

"What Mr. Everett has alleged to have happened are violations of federal law, and we have turned the investigation over to federal authorities," he said. Wood did not further elaborate on the case.

Everett, pastor of Southside Church in Yazoo City, left his home at 9 a.m. on Tuesday, April 27, but never



Everett

arrived at his mother's nursing home in Meridian. Authorities traced a credit card purchase that same day to Tuscaloosa, Ala., and another financial transaction was conducted in Montgomery, Ala., later that afternoon.

A security camera videotaped the Tuscaloosa purchase, and authorities who viewed the tape told his wife, Janet, that Everett appeared to be alone and under no coercion.

His wife said in an interview May 7 that she suspected a physical or medical problem may have led to the disappearance.

BAPTIST RECORD PAGE 5





# Mongolia enters new day for the New Testament

By Donald D. Martin

ULAN BATOR, Mongolia (BP) — For some, it's like living in the New Testament Book of Acts.

What began as a handful of about six Mongolian Christians in 1990, has grown to about 800 believers around the country and about 1,400 attending Christian worship or Bible studies. New followers of Christ — many young and joyfully enthusiastic — gather often to worship, pray, and study Scripture.

Evidence exists that some of the legendary Mongolian khans had Nestorian Christian wives, and some Scripture was available in Mongolia in the past. But following Christ has never before had such a response from Mongolians.

Mongolian believers see God's timing in the availability of a new Mongolian New Testament and in an unprecedented interest in religious faith at a time when Mongolians face hard economic times and collapse of parts of their social structure and political system. People are searching. "They say now that they don't believe anything," said Altanchimeg Gibbens. Gibbens, thought to be the first Mongolian believer of modern times, found Christ while assisting in the translation of the Bible into her language.

"They (Mongolians), trusted communism and what communism told was lies," said Gibbens, who now directs the Mongolian Bible Society. "They're open toward any religion. They're looking to hold something."

Gradually, Christianity has found its way back into Mongolia and is beginning to grow.

Those working alongside Mongolian believers include several English teachers, medical personnel, and others representing Cooperative Services International, a Southern Baptist aid organization.

CSI's first representatives in Mongolia were Stan and Laura Kirk of Tennessee. The Kirks, now in the United States, taught English from 1991-92 at the 3,000-student

Mongolian National Medical University. They plan to return on a more permanent basis in late 1993.

In an effort to be effective, CSI has conferred with the government and signed contracts to help in several areas — education, health care, and agriculture. "We can place people at every sector of the society to do some kind of work which would benefit the Mongolian society," Kirk said.

Those people include Don and Helen McNeely of Texas, now coordinators for CSI projects in Mongolia. They arrived in early 1992 after working for years in Zambia. Martha Taylor, a single woman in the middle of a two-year volunteer assignment, teaches university-level English. She grew up in Mississippi and lived for years in California. More recent arrivals are Gary and Evelyn Harthcock of Florida, English teachers; and David and Laura Meece of Kentucky and Ohio, respectively. He is a medical doctor.

The concept of becoming followers of Christ needs to gain credibility with Mongolians, Kirk stated. Christians from outside Mongolia can play a role in this effort. There's a lot more talk than action in how Christianity is seen in Mongolia, he said. Practical help, such as agriculture, business, medicine, and education, would gain credibility.

For those who have found new life in Christ, reaching others is a matter of satisfying the searching going on in their hearts.

One key is love, said Enkhbayar, a young man emerging as a leader of one of Ulan Bator's

Christian groups. (Most Mongolians use one name only.) "Whatever you say, if they can't see love, it is empty," he said. "What changed my heart was just love. Even if nobody talked about Jesus but they really (showed) love... people would start to be interested in Jesus."

The growth of Christianity in Mongolia has not been without growing pains. One has to do with the numbers of short-term volunteers coming in a sincere, but at times



**GOBI HOSPITALITY** — In the Middle Gobi plains of Mongolia, the traditional, semi-nomadic herdsman's life is a reality for thousands of Mongolians. Visitors to homes like that of Sambuu Nyadaabaatar (foreground) are greeted warmly and served rounds of the "white foods of Mongolia," the milks, curds, and cheeses of their camels, goats, sheep, cows, and horses. (BP photos by Charles Ledford)

counterproductive, effort to work alongside Mongolian believers.

Enkhbayar said often there are a lot of activities but few lasting decisions for Christ. The problem is the number of people coming from the outside — and their preparation. "Most of them don't know about Mongol culture or Mongol language but still they try to do something," he said.

Short-term efforts can be helpful but sheer numbers have overwhelmed ongoing outreach, Kirk said. "There are more parachurch people than church people (in Mongolia)."

The Kirks attended a group called the Bible Fellowship in Ulan Bator. They have seen the impact of this situation. It isn't a matter of good or bad, but good and best. Some groups do good things but zap the energies that might be applied to a permanent Mongolian Christian presence.

Mongolian Christian believers are key witnesses for the gospel in Mongolia.

For example, Buingirgil heard the name of Jesus for the first time at work. Her health was bad and she was discouraged. After she heard about Christ, she prayed

about the problem. "I dreamed someone told me, 'Don't go to the hospital, I will help you,'" she said. As she learned more about following Christ, she decided God was communicating with her. She now says her body is healthy; the problem was in her head.

Now, she tells others. Sometimes, when she starts talking about Jesus Christ, people say, "That is not our religion." Her response: "Buddha was a person like us. He didn't

change my life; God did."

The contagious enthusiasm of Mongolian Christians for their new faith inspires non-believers and longtime Christians alike. Almost every Bible study or worship time has a lot of prayer during the meeting. Then small groups gather to pray about specific needs afterwards. "We've always been a praying people too, but I've never been in a group that prayed as much and as often and as long as these people do," Mrs. McNeely said. "This is their power and this is their resource."

Mongolian believers are fighting a spiritual battle at the same time they are growing in their own new-found faith.

As with Enkhbayar, many new believers struggle with what it means to be a Christian. Making the decision is not the hard part, said Gibbens; it's learning to live by what the Bible says.

"They need to leave behind old life and change... in the heart," she explained. "This is the hardest thing for them. Satan holds them really tightly. Satan doesn't want to lose even one Mongol."

Martin writes for FMB.



**CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP** — After worship at Christ Church in Ulan Bator, Mongolia, members and visitors gather in small groups to have fellowship, pray about specific needs, and read the Bible. Southern Baptist representative Don McNeely (left) and a Mongolian believer talk about a Bible passage after a recent worship service. McNeely and his wife Helen, live in Ulan Bator and direct Cooperative Services International efforts in Mongolia. CSI is a Southern Baptist aid organization. Most recent Christian activity in Mongolia has focused on Ulan Bator, a city of a half-million people. Mongolia's population is 2.3 million.

Mongolia has at least 800 known believers, and about 1,400 Mongolians regularly attend church services.

But the fledgling Mongolian church is a young body of Christians. Most believers have only been Christians for about two years. The most mature Christians accepted Christ as their Savior about three years ago. They have an urgent need for sound discipleship and Christian training.

Administrators at the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board believe Southern Baptists have a role in Mongolia's Christian development. They are asking Southern Baptists to pray for the Mongolian people during this year's Day of Prayer and Fasting for World Evangelization, scheduled from 6 p.m. May 28 to 6 p.m. May 29.

During this 24 hours — just before Pentecost — Southern Baptists will join other Great Commission Christians in praying for the several million Mongolians scattered throughout far eastern Asia. In addition to the 2.3 million who live in the nation of Mongolia, other Mongolians live to the south in China and to the north in Russia.

Some specific prayer requests include:

- That young believers will grow and develop spiritual discernment.
- That personnel who work in the country through Cooperative Services International, the Southern Baptist aid organization, will remain safe and healthy and enjoy success in their work.
- That God will provide Bibles, draw Christians from neighboring countries to minister in Mongolia, and create a network of people to pray regularly for this young Christian community.



# HOUSE TOPS

What I tell you in the darkness, speak in the light: and what you hear whispered in your ear, proclaim upon the housetops. Matthew 10:27 NAS

May 20, 1993

HouseTops is a supplement to the **Baptist Record** and is produced by the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

## Let's Go to RA Camp

Central Hills is receiving registrations for RA Camp sessions. Each camper needs to complete a separate registration form. Forms are available from your church office, your association office or from Central Hills Baptist Retreat, P. O. Box 723, Kosciusko, MS 39090-0723; 601/289-9730.

Two types of camp program are available. The week long resident camp is for boys who are entering third grade through twelfth grade. RA/HSBYM Camps during the following weeks are open: June 21-25, 40 registered; June 28-July 2, 10 registered; July 5-9, 15 registered; July 12-16, 45 registered; July 19-23, 15 registered; July 26-30, 103 registered.

Lad/Dad Weekend Camp is for boys in grades 1, 2 & 3 and their Dads. If Dad cannot come, Granddad, Uncle or "Friend" may bring a boy to camp. Lad/Dad Weekend Camps are still open for June 25-26 and July 16-17.

RA/HSBYM Resident Camp begins at 10:00 a.m. on Mondays. Camp ends after lunch on Fridays. All campers are involved in the following activities: lake-side worship service, flag assembly, mission emphasis, handicrafts, canoeing on a 16-acre lake, horseback riding on the trail, archery, morning watch devotion, Bible study, swimming in a junior olympic pool, camp craft skills instruction, riflery, the adventure/challenge ropes course and the campfire worship service. Groups are also involved in field games and are allowed to play tether ball, foursquare ball and horseshoe pitching. Each camper is assigned to a "Chapter" living unit with campers his own age, size and skill level. Each Chapter is led by a Counselor. Activities are led by Activity Instructors. Other staffers care for the operations functions at Camp. Each staffer is involved in the camp program.

Lad/Dad Weekend Camp sessions begin on Friday afternoons at 3:00 p.m. All campers go to the swimming pool before supper on Friday. All campers participate in activities such as missions emphasis, flag assembly, canoeing on a 16-acre lake, horseback riding on the short trail, morning watch devotion, Bible study, swimming in the junior olympic pool, riflery, the adventure/challenge ropes course. These are also allowed to play tether ball, foursquare ball and pitch horseshoes. This is an opportunity for Dad to do something special with his son in this camp session.

Registrations are received on a first come, first served basis. If you register early you will be more likely to select your choice of dates. Church groups are welcome to schedule a tour of Central Hills. Please call to schedule a visit. ☐



*"I thought HOUSE TOPS was just for the church staff... until I read about VBS training for me. HOUSE TOPS has something for everyone."*

## Howdy, partner!

Your church and the other churches in your association are partners, working together to minister to those in need. Learn more about this life-changing partnership.

**Celebrate Associational Missions Week, May 17-23, 1993.**



## WE ARE FAMILY

by Don Q. Wilson  
Associational Consultant, MBCB

Missions and associations go hand in hand. The sermon, "Expect Great Things from God, Attempt Great Things for God," was the associational sermon in 1792. William Carey preached the mandate for missions to the churches who had met for fellowship in Nottingham, England. The association of churches was already more than 100 years old. Missions is the heart of Southern Baptists.

For more than 100 years the association was the only linkage from church to church. The association of churches helps the local church do what God called the local church to do in His Kingdom. The association of churches provides support for encouragement of accomplishing God's purpose in the local community, state, nation, and world. Mission commitment through prayer, giving of resources, and by personal involvement are essential to the association of churches.

The association is the most vital link in Baptist life to maintain a positive relationship between local churches, the state convention, and the national denomination. The association puts a face on missions among the local churches.

Churches cooperating can get the job of missions done beyond the local setting, which a church alone may not be able to do. From the joint efforts of churches in the association comes a strategy for missions in the local setting. Pastors, staff members, and other church members are challenged to attempt their best for Christ

together. No one (person or church) can do as much alone as can be done in a cooperative effort. The Holy Spirit is the One who empowers His people. We must never forget: The Lord leads, guides, and blesses. All honor must go to Him.

Opportunity, training, resourcing, and communicating for the gospel are all done as a part of the ministry of the association of churches. Since 1707, in America, preaching, evangelism, and fellowship have been central among Baptist churches which work together in associations. "An association is created by the churches, is composed of the churches, is governed by messengers from the churches, is a resource and challenge to the churches, works with and on behalf of the churches, and is supported by the churches." (J.C. Bradley: *A Baptist Association*)

In short, without the associating of local churches, there is no association. The association does not exist apart from local churches. The purpose of the association of churches is, "churches on mission together."

Mississippi has 73 associations. The associations are generally formed by counties or a combination of counties. Mississippi has 56 directors of missions who serve from one to three associations. Associational staff varies from full-time, multi-staff positions to a part-time, one-day a month staff position. The director of missions (DOM) is a vital link between state convention/denominational life. On the average, the DOM will spend about one hour of eight planning for and promoting events offered by the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board. The DOM is likely the best known denominational person in Baptist life. He provides an indispensable ministry to the local churches, the state convention, and to the denomination. ☐



# Mississippi Baptist

## 1993 Student



Heather Arnold  
Blue Mountain  
Canada



Russell Barnes  
Ole Miss  
Korea



Jason Blackburn  
Blue Mountain  
Canada



Chris Brown  
Miss. College  
Zimbabwe



Laura Burnett  
William Carey  
Canada



Toby Johnston  
U.S.M.  
Taiwan



Jonathan Miles  
Blue Mountain  
Canada



Albert Moore  
Ole Miss  
Zimbabwe



Melissa Morgan  
Jones  
Canada



Theo Parson  
U.S.M.  
Canada



Christy Abbott  
Jones  
The Northwest



Michael Aoa  
Northeast  
Montana



Charles Blake  
Miss. College  
The Northwest



Carmen Breland  
Jones  
California



Allyson Bridges  
Ole Miss  
Alaska



Pam Brown  
Delta State  
Wyoming



Angi Donald  
Jones  
Indiana



Rachelle Dunn  
William Carey  
Indiana



Rita Ezell  
Miss. State  
Nevada



Keith Gardner  
Jones  
Alaska



Jan Gilbreath  
Miss. State  
California



Susan Hales  
Blue Mountain  
California



Cherish Johnson  
Jackson State  
California



Phil Keller  
William Carey  
The Northwest



Tori Laffoon  
M.U.W.  
The Northwest



Jennifer Lamkin  
Holmes  
Wyoming



Amy Leggett  
Jones  
California



Cindy Magee  
Miss. College  
The Northwest



April Presnell  
William Carey  
California



Kim Prime  
Gulf Coast-JC  
New York



Jana Rayborn  
Pearl River  
Florida



Todd Rayburn  
Pearl River  
The Northwest



Robin Reid  
Jones  
Nevada



Keith Simpson  
Hinds  
California

**STUDY**  
*making a difference*

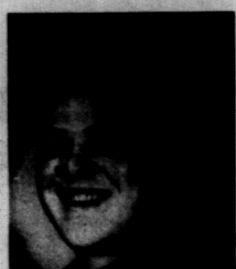


# st Student Union

## Missionaries



a Burnett  
am Carey  
anada



Nathan Carroll  
Pearl River  
Zimbabwe



Becky Courtney  
Delta State  
Kazakhstan



Bobby Daniel  
William Carey  
Zimbabwe



Robin Garrett  
Hinds  
Israel



Tim Pippin  
Jones  
Canada



Trudy Routh  
Blue Mountain  
Malaysia



Georgia Spence  
Pearl River  
Canada



David Thurman  
William Carey  
Kazakhstan



John Works  
Miss. State  
Kazakhstan



Kristen Bush  
Hinds  
Montana



Christy Byrd  
Miss. State  
Montana



Brian Campbell  
Holmes  
Montana



Jackie Chatel  
Gulf Coast-JC  
Alaska



Kathryn Clayton  
Miss. State  
Hawaii



Mark Davis  
Delta State  
Colorado



Boyd Herrington  
William Carey  
The Northwest



April Hicks  
Miss. College  
Florida



Erik Holder  
U.S.M.  
Florida



Darnell Isaac  
East Central  
Iowa



Charles Jackson  
Delta State  
Hawaii



Judy Jenkins  
Hinds  
Washington, D.C.



Julie Magee  
Jones  
California



Julia Massey  
Blue Mountain  
Ohio



Wes McMichael  
Miss. State  
Florida



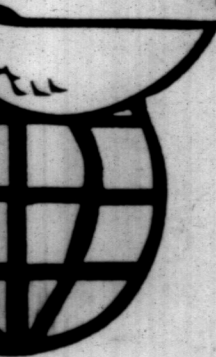
Derek Melton  
Miss. College  
Alaska



Stewart Moody  
Miss. College  
Colorado



Peter Pinnow  
Delta State  
Montana



DENTS  
difference



Ellen Smith  
Delta State  
Wyoming



Kim South  
Northeast  
Iowa



Ginger Stalls  
Blue Mountain  
Wyoming



Amy Stevens  
Blue Mountain  
New York



Aimee Turner  
U.S.M.  
The Northwest



Gregory Woodward  
Jones  
Arizona



## PRAYERGRAM

May 20 - June 3, 1993

**P**RAY for continued rain in Africa. Some rain has fallen, but it has not been enough. Pray that rain will saturate the land and restore water reserves.

**P**RAY that the Lord will send a music missionary to work in Baptist churches of the Dominican Republic (an island southeast of Cuba). The people feel the need to make music an integral part of their worship experience.

**P**RAY that pastors of rural churches of India may have an opportunity for formal seminary training. Pray that local seminars can be held and pray for the necessary teachers of these studies.

**P**RAY for the witnessing efforts of Southern Baptists in Houston, Tex., before the Convention. Pray that "Crossover Houston" will be the finest effort yet. "Crossover" can have two meanings: crossing the city with the gospel and allowing the cross of Jesus to shine over the city.

**P**RAY for Delma Cline, church planter of the McCook Baptist Church of North Sioux City, S.D. Pray for the maturing of members. Many are from other denominations and need to understand Baptist

doctrine. Pray for numerical growth; attendance averages 32.

**P**RAY for Faye Pearson, a missionary to Taiwan, who has been elected as Area Director for the East Asia mission work. She is a Mississippian (native of Laurel), and is the first woman to serve as area director overseas.

**P**RAY for the Calvary Chapel at Parchman. The mission, now finishing its third year in ministry to state penitentiary staff families, is experiencing growing pains and is adding an additional 2700 square feet of educational space. The 1992 Margaret Lackey State Mission offering is at work at the Calvary Chapel.

**P**RAY for the BSU summer missionaries who are preparing for their fields of service for the coming months of June, July and August. Pray for them on a regular basis and pray for their families.

**P**RAY for Lay Renewal weekends in a number of Mississippi Baptist churches scheduled to be held this summer.

## MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST PRAYERLINE 969-PRAY

### Dear Friends,

*The thrust of our program is focused on the Convention objective of "Helping to Bring Mississippi and the World to Jesus." There will be a specific focus on church leadership that will result in growth. You will find help in understanding and implementing your work in the areas of pastoral ministry, church growth, and administration. Pastors, other staff members, deacons, deacons' wives, church and associational secretaries may choose special tracks of study. Ministers' wives and family members (including children of all ages) will find sessions designed specifically for them.*

*We will share our conference with representatives from the Cooperative Missions Department.*

*We sincerely hope you will decide now to come to the beautiful Gulf Coast and be inspired and refreshed by attending our conference. For lodging information, you may call Frank Simmons, manager, Gulfshore Baptist Assembly at 452-7261.*

*For conference registration or further information, you may call the Church Administration-Pastoral Ministries Dept. at 968-3800.*

### Bible • Preaching • Administration Conference

**June 21-23, 1993**

**Gulfshore  
Baptist  
Assembly**

### Conferences

- Bible Study
- Pastoral Leadership
- Deacons
- Deacons' Wives
- Secretaries
- Ministers' Wives
- Church Missions
- Youth Conference
- Children of Conferees
- Associational Pastoral Ministry Directors

Sponsored by:  
Church Administration-Pastoral Ministries  
Dept., Cooperative Missions Dept., MBCB

Ministry of your Cooperative Program

"Helping to Bring Mississippi and  
the World to Jesus"

## BACKYARD BIBLE CLUB

### MISSION VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL WORKSHOPS

**JUNE 5, 1993  
SATURDAY, 9:30-2:30**

#### • First Baptist Church, Olive Branch

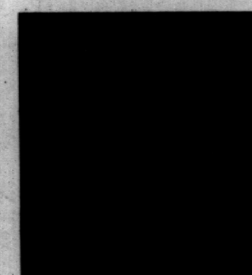
LEADERS

Debi Smith Lily Culp

#### • First Baptist Church, Long Beach

LEADERS

Cindy Sansing Linda Reeves



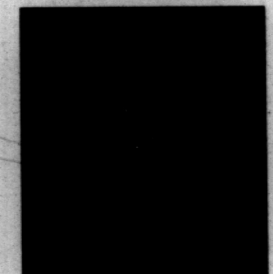
Debi Smith



Lily Culp



Cindy Sansing



Linda Reeves

### PURPOSE:

*This workshop will train local church Backyard Bible Club/Mission VBS faculties to plan and conduct these projects utilizing the Backyard Bible Club/Mission VBS Curriculum.*

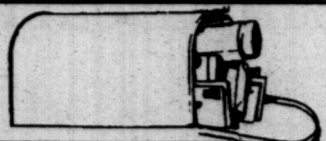
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# HOUSE TOPS





# Letters to the editor



## Articles illuminating

Editor:

For the past dozen years I have been mostly mystified by the so-called conservative-moderate debate. There are two items in the April 29 **Baptist Record** which may have illuminated the issue for me.

The article on a comic strip's homosexual theme was good and informative, yet the thrust was troubling. The letter writer who wanted to stand up against this effort was more or less portrayed as overreacting. The counselors quoted make good points and I heartily agree that this situation presents a good opportunity to broach the subject with children. Yet the main challenge of this homosexual intrusion remains unopposed.

The article quotes counselor Buddy Wagner, "It might convince some young people to see it as acceptable, however." This is the real danger. Think of the consequences of this acceptance in following generations. Are we to privately face sin but publicly shrink from standing and labeling it as such? Is this public passivity in the face of sin part of the conservative/moderate debate?

In letters to the editor, a pastor writing against "civic religion" apparently adopts revisionist history. He ignores the writings of our founders and others who were there. This is all very politically

correct but wrong. Could this teaching have come from a seminary, Christian college, or secular college in preparation for the ministry? Is this type of teaching part of the conservative/moderate debate?

Could the debate be over a distinction between being "in the world" and being "of the world?" Perhaps this divisive debate is calling each of us to test our stand against God's Word. Perhaps this self re-examination might be preparing us for worse to come. Maybe we had better be absolutely certain we are standing solely on the Solid Rock.

Davis Guy McAduy  
Lucedale

## Church-state separation

Editor:

Two recent letter-writers in the **Baptist Record** have recommended the church-state books and videos of David Barton, head of the Texas-based Wallbuilders, Inc. However, **Record** readers should be aware that the group's materials vary widely from accepted scholarship.

Barton and company present a cleverly constructed but inaccurate portrayal of American history that attacks the separation of church and state, a constitutional principle that has given Americans more religious freedom and interfaith harmony than any people in world history.

**Record** readers who are interested in the facts about Barton may write to Americans United for a free copy of the April issue of our monthly magazine **Church & State**. It carefully examines Barton's materials and reports on his ties to radical political groups. (We also have available a video, "Religious Freedom: Made in the USA," that accurately details the history of religious liberty in our country.)

Americans should be wary of groups that want to undo the separation of church and state. We need only look at Northern Ireland, Iran, and the former Yugoslavia to see what can happen when political and religious movements become intertwined.

Barry W. Lynn  
Americans United for  
Separation of Church and State  
Silver Spring, Md.

## Dramas reach people

Editor:

I am writing in response to "Playing God" in the April 29 issue (of the **Baptist Record**). I strongly feel that drama is a valuable tool for reaching the lost for Christ. There are few ways to depict Christ through drama without someone portraying him.

I fail to see how the fourth commandment relates to portraying Christ through drama. Perhaps the writer was referring to the second commandment, which is found in verse 4 of Exodus 20. But even then, becoming the image of Christ is not the same as erecting a graven image to worship instead of God. In fact, all of us are to be the image of Christ in our daily lives! We are to be like him in all ways. Our portrayal of Christ in our own lives and the portrayal of Christ through drama are no different. It is not blasphemy. It is how we share our faith with others.

1 Corinthians 9:19-23 shows us that different people will be reached for Christ by different ways. In truth, the Holy Spirit works in many ways to convict men of sin. The fact that there are people who come to know Christ at church plays proves that the Lord does speak through them, for no one can come to the Father unless he is first drawn to him (John 6:44).

We all know how effectively the gospel can be proclaimed through preaching. How powerfully God can speak through the voice of his messengers! But let's not forget how God can speak through other ways. After all, who would we be to tell God how he can speak to us?

Mike Hudson  
Brandon

## Gulf Coast Crusade

Editor:

In our world of declining moral values, crises in integrity, families disintegrating, and a host of other negative pressures, once again we

have seen and experienced the power of the gospel to set people free and change the course of life.

George County Baptist Association has just completed a Good News Gulf Coast Crusade with Evangelist Kelly Green of Mobile, Ala. In the four-night crusade, 300 decisions were recorded. Out of the 300 decisions, 194 were professions of faith. The crusade effort drew people from four counties and had an impact on 50 churches.

The evangelistic team, composed of Green, Ronnie Hill, and Dick Hill, demonstrated a true picture of New Testament servanthood.

The Home Mission Board and the Mississippi Baptist Evangelism Department are to be commended for their constant encouragement and support.

John W. Henry, DOM  
George/Greene Area Missions

## Masonry and church

Editor:

Having been a Christian for 31 years, a music director for 11 years, a pastor for 12 years, a director of missions for three years, and a member of a Masonic Lodge for 17 years, I find myself involved in quite a controversy.

First, let me state that I became a Christian when I felt the call of God to repentance and service. In Christ I found my Saviour and Lord. Lest no one misunderstand, Jesus is all I need.

One day I saw a young man changed from a criminal and an adulterer to a faithful husband who both respected the law and revered God. Asking some questions of my own, I discovered that this young man had been introduced to the brotherhood and teachings of Freemasonry. It was his first contact with teachings of morality and individual responsibility. By the evidence of change in his life, it was a dramatic step in the right direction. I wanted to

know more about an organization that could change lives for the better. I too explored the teachings of Freemasonry and found them not only compatible, but supportive of my commitment and service to God and my local church. In my past and present experience, I have encountered no conflicts between the Lodge and the Church.

Like many fraternities, Masonry is full of symbols, and symbols are always open to misinterpretation. Non-Christians tend to misinterpret Christian symbols of the cross and baptism, as non-Masons tend to misinterpret symbols within the Lodge. Common sense can shed a great deal of light on the many metaphors, analogies, and symbols used since the world began.

Many Southern Baptist pastors and deacons are members of a local Masonic Lodge. In south Mississippi, Masons in some churches are 90% of the active male membership, with many women also involved in the Masonic auxiliary, the Eastern Star. The national average of Masons in Southern Baptist churches each Sunday could be as high as 32%, all worshipping and praising God without any conflict of conscience.

Dale Little, DOM  
Adams-Union Association

## Advice for the Body

Editor:

Found in an old commentary is the following wise and pertinent comment for all Christians, including belligerent Southern Baptists:

"The true body of Christ (all believers) is already one as joined to the one Head. But its unity is as yet not visible, even as the Head is not visible; but it shall appear when He shall appear. Meanwhile, the rule is, in essentials, unity; in doubtful questions, liberty; in all things, charity."

Charles Horner  
Jackson

## Devotional...

## Partnership needs you

By Bill Hardy

Man has been intrigued for decades over the possibility of becoming invisible. Actor Jimmy Stewart was successful in providing an interesting screen drama with "Harvey," the invisible rabbit.

In reality, however, no one has succeeded in making a person or thing invisible, much less been able to utilize the abilities of a so-called invisible being.

The church member who says, "I'll be there in spirit, but not in body," is really saying, "Don't count on me, I can't help."

The Zimbabwe partnership is plagued by invisible spirits where warm bodies are needed.

Since Jan. 1, two teams requiring ten persons each have been cancelled — only invisible spirits were present. The five projects remaining have only partial teams because volunteers have not repented.

The missionary and national leadership in Zimbabwe are depending on some 40 Mississippians to respond in helping them with personal witnessing, evangelistic services, and sharing their testimonies. Thus far, less than 15 have indicated they will be present in person to help. These are our opportunities. Will you help?

"Warm bodies" should respond to Partnership Missions Office, Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205, or telephone (601) 968-3800.

Hardy is Partnership Missions coordinator, MBCB.

For nearly 100 years, we've seen tragedies like the one suffered by the 165-member congregation of the Greenville, Georgia, Baptist Church strike churches like yours.

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lost their house.



## Just for the Record

Woolmarket Church, Biloxi, will have fifth Sunday celebrations on May 30. Dinner on the grounds will be served following the morning worship service. An afternoon concert will be presented by Jasper Butler. Argile Smith is interim pastor.

Campers on Mission National Rally will be held at Tres Rios Campground, Glen Rose, Texas, June 22-25. Campers on Mission is sponsored by the Home Mission Board and the Baptist Sunday School Board. Membership, open to campers of all denominations, requires no fees or dues.

Southwest Baptist University, Bolivar, Mo., is seeking nominations and applications for the position of provost. Send name, address, and phone number to Betty VanBlair, Chair, Provost Search Committee, Southwest Baptist University, 1601 S. Springfield, Bolivar, MO 65613 or fax (417) 326-1652.

Mississippi College will have

## Names in the News

Charles Arthur Sanders, 75, a deacon and past church treasurer for 40 years at Slayden Church, Slayden, died April 6. Funeral services were held April 8 with burial in Slayden Cemetery. He is survived by his wife, Faye Vaughn Sanders; a daughter, Kitty King of Slayden; three sons, Charlie Sanders of Senatobia and Dick Sanders and Carl Sanders, both of Slayden, and nine grandchildren.

Rowe C. Holcomb Jr. has written a book entitled *That's What My Papa said... And He was a Preacher*, about his grandfather (1860-1930) who pastored in Quitman, Wesson, Wiggins, Poplarville, and Purvis. Three of his sons, Harmon, Luther, and Rowe, were preachers. Luther was the executive director of the Baptist Sunday School Board for 18 years



Stephen and Angela Bryant arrived in Mombasa, Kenya, March 16, to fill a two-year assignment at Mombasa Baptist High School through International Service Corps program. He will be a teacher and coach, and she will teach and work with students in Bible study. They also will work in the English-language Baptist church in Mombasa. He is a native of Iowa. The former Angela Kaye Stockstill, she is the daughter of Allen and Brenda Stockstill of Gulfport. She is the granddaughter of Allen and Alma Stockstill of Nicholson and the late Pat and Doris Spiers of McNeill.

two summer terms during which a wide variety of courses on the undergraduate and graduate levels are offered. Registration for the first term is scheduled for June 1 from 9-11:30 a.m. in the A. E. Wood Coliseum. Call 1-800-738-1236 for more information.

Van Winkle Church, Jackson, will celebrate its 55th anniversary on May 23 at 10 a.m. Former pastors and their families have been invited back for this special day. Candy Patterson, guest soloist, will sing in the morning service and present a concert in the afternoon. Dinner will be provided by the youth. A special feature of the day will be the dedication of portraits of eight former pastors that will be displayed in the educational building. Mike Burczynski is pastor.

Oakdale Church, Brandon, will celebrate Family Day on May 23. Sunday School will be held at 10 a.m. and worship at 11 a.m. Michael Weeks, pastor, will deliver a message focused on the current issues attacking today's fami-

ly. A covered dish dinner will be served following the morning service. The Broken Vessels, a Southern gospel group, will sing during the morning service and present a concert following lunch. A love offering will be taken. Mike Hudson is minister of music and youth. For more information call the church office at (601) 829-1360 or 825-0713.

Oakdale Church will have a bazaar and bake sale on Saturday, May 22, 7 a.m.-12 p.m. The proceeds will benefit mission work by the Baptist Young Women.

Siloam Church, Magee, will celebrate its 100th anniversary in August. The church would like to have pictures, memorabilia, and names and addresses of former pastors and members. Any pictures or memorabilia sent to the church will be returned. Contact Carrie L. Bynum, church clerk, Rt. 2, Box 231, Magee, MS 39111, or call 353-9500.

## Homecomings

Sand Ridge, Lake: May 23; Sunday School, 10 a.m.; worship, 11 a.m.; dinner on grounds, noon; John Flemming, guest speaker; afternoon singing; Timmy Fanguy, pastor.

First, Marion (Lauderdale): May 23; 11 a.m.; covered dish dinner on grounds, 12:15 p.m.; W. Lowery Compere, Newton, guest speaker; Walter M. Blackman, pastor.

Antioch (Lawrence): May 23; James Allgood, guest speaker; Sunday School, 10 a.m.; worship, 11 a.m.; lunch served in fellowship hall, noon; afternoon singing.

## Revival Results

Lynn Ray Road, Petal: April 25-28; Clark Stewart, Crystal Springs, evangelist; Ronnie Clemts, Hattiesburg, music; six professions of faith; Emmett Boone, pastor.

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## Olive Branch, Long Beach host BYBC/VBS workshops

The Sunday School Department of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board will conduct two Backyard Bible Club/Mission VBS workshops on Saturday, June 5, from 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

The locations and leaders are: First Church, Olive Branch: Debi Smith, Hattiesburg, and Lily Culp, Corinth; and First Church, Long Beach: Linda Reeves, Sunday School Department, and Cindy Sansing, Jackson.

These workshops will train local



Sansing

Reeves

church Backyard Bible Club/Mission VBS faculties to plan and conduct these projects utilizing the Backyard Bible Club/Mission VBS curriculum.

The workshops are free. Drinks will be served, but participants should bring a sack lunch.

For more information, call Larry Salter, consultant, Sunday School Department, Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, (601) 968-3800.

## Revival Dates

Edwards (Hinds-Madison): May 23-26; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Monday-Wednesday, 7 p.m.; Cliff Estes, Shreveport, La., evangelist; Leroy Stuart, Clinton, music; dinner on the grounds following 11 a.m. Sunday service; Tommy M. May, pastor.

Interstate (Bolivar): May 23-26; Jim Hill, Gulfport, evangelist; Gerald and Cindy Simmons, Gulfport, music; Hill Family will also be singing; Robert E. Haney, pastor.

Poplar Springs, Newton: May 23-28; Ralph Buckley, Sikeston, Mo., evangelist; Marion Felton, Newton, music; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Monday-Friday, 7 p.m.; John Boggan, pastor.

West End, West Point: May 23-28; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Monday-Friday, 12:25 p.m. and 7 p.m.; Nelson Crozier, former pastor, evangelist; Troy Carter, South Eastern Baptist College, music; Terry Partin, pastor.

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**THE COMMUNITY BAPTIST CHURCH** in Columbus, Miss., is presently looking for a part time minister of music and youth. Any individual who is interested should mail a resume to: Community Baptist Church, Search Committee Chairman, 2490 Yorkville Road East, Columbus, MS 39702 or they may call 327-5306 or 328-2105.

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**NEW HOPE BAPTIST CHURCH**, Meridian, is seeking a full-time minister of music/education. If interested please mail resume to: New Hope Baptist Church, Rt. 1, Box 399, Meridian, MS 39301.

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**CALVARY CHRISTIAN SCHOOL**, Meridian, Miss., is accepting applicants for the position of school principal. Interested parties should send a resume to Calvary Baptist Church, P.O. Box 4097, Meridian, MS 39304.



## Staff Changes

Glade Church, Laurel, has called Mike Thompson as pastor effective May 2. His previous place of service was Coat Church in Magee.

Harmony Church, Louisville, has called Shane M. Lambert as minister of youth effective May 2. He is currently attending Jacksonville State University, Jacksonville, Ala.

Graceway Church, Jackson, has called Thomas E. Winn as pastor effective May 2. His previous place of service was Halbert Heights, Brookhaven.

Lewis Oswalt, assistant professor of music at Mississippi College, has resigned as part-time

music minister at Woodland Hills Church, Jackson. He has served as interim music director and revival musician in several churches in the state.

Parkway Church, Natchez, has called James L. "Jim" Reid as minister of youth. He is a native of New Orleans and a graduate of New Orleans Seminary. He goes to Parkway Church from First Southern Baptist Church, Scottsdale, Ariz., where he served as associate pastor/minister of youth and college.



Reid

## Expert offers tips on "cult-proofing" your children

COLUMBUS, Ohio (EP) — No parent wants their child to wind up burning in Waco or drinking poison Kool-Aid in Guyana. But how do you keep that from happening? In his soon-to-be-released book *Cult-Proofing Your Kids* (Zondervan, 1993), Paul Martin offers these suggestions:

- \* Don't overprotect your children.
- \* Allow your children to express their thoughts and emotions: For instance, anger isn't always a sin; questioning isn't always defiance.
- \* Don't overcontrol your child: Allow children to act independently, gaining more control over their own lives as they mature.
- \* Don't overemphasize the value of obedience: Martin noted, "We should teach obedience, but we should also teach discernment — whom to obey, in which situations,

in what ways."

\* Respect your children's different learning styles: Some children are analytical and systematic, others are creative and intuitive. Don't try to fit them into the same mold — that's what cults do.

\* Encourage your church to teach about cults and fringe churches.

\* Discipline your children, but do not abuse them.

\* Recognize your own addictions.

\* Give your children loving and correct moral training: Children learn morality from parental actions, not words, Martin said.

\* Watch how your child responds to discipline: The child who is a bit too compliant, a bit too good, or a bit too sensitive may need help developing assertiveness if he is to resist cults.

Thursday, May 20, 1993

## Family's nightmare a trial of faith

By Ray Waddle

NASHVILLE (BP) — Jimmy Allen, a former Southern Baptist Convention president, thought he left seminary with God in his pocket — a fix-it God he could capture in a Sunday morning sermon.

But in the middle of a distinguished career, he became wrapped in a nightmare.

His youngest son's entire family got AIDS and a panicked Disciples of Christ church kicked them out. A baby grandson died. So did the baby's mother.

Just when Allen thought it couldn't get any worse, his middle son also contracted AIDS.

Suddenly, the traditional Sunday School answers no longer made sense.

"When I left seminary, I pretty much had God set down in my notebooks," said Allen, now a Georgia pastor who is wrapping up an academic year as a visiting scholar at Vanderbilt University's First Amendment Center.

"Now, I don't know nearly as much about God as I did after seminary. But what I have learned about God is so real it takes your breath away. Sometimes you learn about God only through suffering, things you learn no other way."

Allen, 65, is a statesman in a denomination that prides itself on finding answers in the Bible to life's toughest questions, but life has tried to mock him by swallow-

ing his loved ones in a disease that has no cure.

Allen's son Scott's wife, Lydia, died of acquired immune deficiency syndrome last year after receiving a transfusion of contaminated blood 10 years before. His two grandsons were born with the disease; one died in 1986.

Unrelated to that tragedy, Allen's son, Skip, also contracted AIDS. Skip Allen is gay, a lifestyle his father does not accept.

Intensifying the hurt even more, Jimmy Allen witnessed a string of churches abandon his loved ones when the Allens needed the church most.

Scott Allen, an ordained Baptist minister working at a Disciples of Christ church in Colorado Springs, Colo., had to resign in 1985 when the senior minister learned Scott's wife and sons were struggling with AIDS.

"That was the most excruciating pain of all — seeing that those churches were unable to muster the courage to do the hard thing, the threatening thing, and follow the Founder," said Jimmy Allen. He was president of the SBC in 1978, the last moderate leader before conservatives took control of the church body.

Some would see Allen as a latter-day Job, an upright man whom God cruelly tested by destroying his family. But Allen resists that image.

"I don't ask, 'Why us?'" said Allen, whose family was profiled in the April issue of *Texas Monthly* magazine.

Allen has managed to hang onto his faith and even go deeper into his relationship with Jesus Christ.

Not so his son Scott, 37, who watched his wife and their infant son die of AIDS.

Scott Allen, who never contracted the disease, has given up organized Christianity and now lives in Dallas with his son, Matthew, 10, who is living with AIDS.

Jimmy Allen and his son, having taken conflicting spiritual paths in the wake of family death, spar on religious questions but remain close, they said.

Jimmy Allen said he is also close to his older son, Skip, despite his difficulty with Skip's lifestyle.

"I love him, I'm proud of him. He's one of the most caring guys I know. I think you can love someone and still not approve a lifestyle."

At the center of family concern now is Matthew, who has weakened lately but still attends school and has defied doctors' predictions of an early death.

Matthew's illness made several churches balk at embracing the family because of concerns about his mixing with other children.

"You rescue good out of evil — a lot of churches that rejected them were forced to confront their fears and now have policies regarding people with AIDS," Jimmy Allen said. "But it's too late to undo the wound in Scott's life."

A Church of Christ congregation in suburban Dallas finally accepted Matthew into a day-care program, after three years of rejection from other churches.

Used by permission. Waddle is the religion writer at THE TENNESSEAN in Nashville.

## David Wilkinson is named to CBF post

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (ABP) — David Wilkinson, vice president for seminary relations with Southern Seminary, has been named communications coordinator and interim staff administrator for the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship.

Wilkinson, 38, was elected to the newly created position by the Fellowship's Coordinating Council May 12, one day before the Fellowship's annual general assembly. He officially begins work June 1.

In his new role, Wilkinson will be the Fellowship's chief public relations officer, will plan and direct all functions of public rela-

tions, marketing, news, and information, and will supervise office support staff.

He is the fourth professional staff member hired for the Fellowship's Atlanta office. The other three are Cecil Sherman, Fellowship coordinator, Keith Parks, missions coordinator, and Betty Law, missions associate.

The Fellowship is a two-year-old organization of Southern Baptist moderates who have abandoned the 14-year struggle with fundamental-conservatives for control of the SBC in favor of starting their own organization for fellowship and ministry.

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## Blue Mtn. loses BSU building to blaze

The Baptist Student Union building at Blue Mountain College burned Monday, May 17, during a lightning storm. The building and its contents were destroyed.

The 5,559 square-foot structure was built in 1940, and housed the BSU center and offices.

Tracy Simmons, BSU director, returned Monday evening with a group of students from a mission trip to the Northwest to find the damage.

E. Harold Fisher, president of the college, stated the building was insured, but not at replacement cost.



## Uniform Affirming Christ as Jesus



By Chuck Pourciau  
John 7:37-52

In 1992, the one news item that dominated the airwaves was the presidential campaign. It was the duty of the voter to study each candidate's position on the issues so he could cast an informed, prayerful vote. We sought the implications of selecting each man as president, because those implications were different for each candidate.

In John 7 the issue of Jesus as the Messiah is brought into focus. What are the implications of Jesus of Nazareth being the Christ?

**The satisfaction and ministry of God's indwelling Spirit (vv. 37-39).** In verse 37 Jesus spoke of the satisfaction that comes from affirming him as the Christ. He taught that the gospel is for all who believe when he called for *anyone* being thirsty to come to him and drink. Jesus continues to cry out to a thirsting world today, and what he offers does quench thirst.

He also spoke of the ministry of the Holy Spirit in the Christian when he stated that streams of living water will flow from within the believer. Notice he said the water would *flow*, not seep, trickle, or drip. That the Holy Spirit is said to flow from within them indicates the effect that the Spirit has on those around the believer. People should encounter the Holy Spirit when they encounter the Christian.

**Division among the people (vv. 40-44).** Some of the people proclaimed Jesus as the Christ. Others claimed that no Messiah could come from Galilee. This is not the first time in John that Jesus received little respect because of the location of his hometown. Nathanael had wondered if anything good could come from Nazareth (1:46). Those who had trouble with him did so because he did not fit into their preconceived notions concerning the Messiah. Jesus was not there to fit into their preconceived notions. He was there to serve the Father.

Disagreement over religion and Christianity often causes division among people. Many times we disagree when the teaching does not fit into our time-honored traditions. It is difficult to allow Scripture to interpret our beliefs rather than imposing our beliefs on Scripture. Also, we must not allow ourselves to be forced into being somebody we aren't. God made each of us unique to fulfill a unique purpose in his will, and under the direction of the Holy Spirit.

**Criticism of those who believe (vv. 45-49).** Many of the common people were more perceptive than the religious elite. Even the temple guards were in awe of the authority and power present in the life and teaching of Jesus. The Pharisees criticized both the guards and those who had believed in Jesus as the Christ. They felt their power over the people slipping away.

Education is not the key to spiritual insight. Some of the most profound spiritual insights I have ever received have come from those whose only theological education was received through the local church, personal Bible reading, prayer, and life experiences. The most important element in spiritual insight is not a seminary education but the Holy Spirit. Also, criticism will be common for those who believe. Don't worry about it. Expect it.

**Determination of the opposition (vv. 50-52).** Nicodemus seemed to have at least a little more wisdom than the others when he warned against condemning Jesus so hastily. Yet the Pharisees would not listen to wise counsel. Instead they turned on Nicodemus and ridiculed Galilee as a place of origin. Their opposition to the will of the Lord was stubborn.

The opposition to Jesus and the gospel is still very stubborn. Satan is determined to fight against everything the Lord and the church fight for and fight for everything the Lord and the church fight against. He will not be deterred until he is thrown for all eternity into the lake of fire. Oh, that the church was as determined as the devil! If we were as determined to defeat the devil as he is to deter us, the entire world would be won to the gospel in a very short time.

When we consider the implications of affirming Jesus as Christ, one implication stands out above all others. To affirm Jesus is to receive eternal life. To reject Jesus is to accept eternal death.

Pourciau is pastor, First Church, Louisville.

## Bible Book The incomparable God



By Guy A. Hughes  
Isaiah 40, 42, 43

In the early days of the automobile, a man's Model-T Ford stalled in the middle of the road. He couldn't get it started no matter how hard he cranked nor how much he tried to advance the spark or adjust things under the hood. Just then a chauffeured limousine pulled up behind him, and a wiry, energetic man stepped out from the back seat and offered his assistance. After tinkering for a few moments, the stranger said, "Now try it!" Immediately the engine leaped to life. The well-dressed individual then identified himself as Henry Ford. "I designed and built these cars," he said, "so I know what to do when something goes wrong."

This old world is in a mess and needs to be fixed. From cult suicide in Waco to war atrocities in Bosnia, mankind need not look far to see its need for a Savior. Isaiah revealed in his messages to Judah the answer to man's problems. The prophet's description of the incomparable God teaches that God is the only God and he alone can save.

**The prophet's call to comfort God's people (40:1-5a).** The exiled Israelites were in distress. They had suffered greatly for their sins at the hands of the Babylonians. God's Hand of Providence would now turn from judgment to redemption. The time had come for Isaiah to comfort the people. The phrase "speak ye comfortably" literally means "speak to the heart." God was calling upon Isaiah to speak a message of encouragement to "my people." Though the Israelites had abandoned God in the past, he refused to abandon them and was reaching out to their troubled hearts. The word "cry" called for Isaiah to communicate this message boldly and with great feeling. The time for judgement was over. Redemption is drawing nigh and God was calling Isaiah to prepare the way for the salvation of the Lord.

**God the incomparable Creator (40:25-26).** God asks, "Look around! Find anything on earth made by human hands which can compare to my awesome power." He then calls on his people to "Look up!" Anyone who desires an appointment with God must look up from the sin of this world and acknowledge his holiness.

Prior to his conversion, Van Gorder was an agnostic thoroughly schooled in the evolutionary hypothesis which he embraced and taught. A direct descendant of Thomas Paine, he had read and digested *The Age of Reason*. So he laughed at the idea of creation by a direct act of God. Reading in the newspaper that the pastors of the city were going to help put on the roof of the Billy Sunday Tabernacle which was then under construction, he went from his office at the noon hour, as he put it, "to watch that lazy bunch work." One of them recognized him, came down from the roof of the tabernacle, and led him to Christ. The next morning Van Gorder opened a Bible and began reading it. He started at Genesis 1, which says, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." At that first sentence he stopped. "Why," he said, "that is the first sensible explanation of how things got started that I have ever read!"

What made the change? The Lord had come to dwell in his heart, and truth had been revealed by his Spirit. Saving faith had come into operation, and it is "through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God."

**A description of the servant and his mission (42:1-4).** After asserting the awesome creative, holy power of God, the prophet described God's servant and mission. Christ is the ultimate fulfillment of this description (Matt. 12:17-21). Of course, because Christ now indwells within us, we too are servants. The mission is to carry God's salvation to a lost and dying world. "He shall not fail" refers to how the magnitude of the mission will not cause the servant to weaken and abandon the calling.

**God the only Savior (43:10-13).** Just as God is the only Creator, he is also the only Savior. There is only one path to salvation and we must walk it with Jesus. Thomas said, "Lord, how can we know the way? Jesus answered, I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."

Hughes is pastor, Friendship Church, Grenada.

## Life and Work Challenge of difficulties



By Laura Russell  
Acts 6:8-10, 13-15; 7:55-60

Trials, grief, and suffering, whether temporary or enduring, do not destroy the real purpose of life. Life is not given merely for happiness and personal fulfillment, but for us to serve and honor God. Don't assume that because God truly loves you, he will always prevent difficult situations. The opposite may be true. God's love cannot be measured or limited by how greatly we may suffer. Romans 8:38-39 teaches us that nothing can separate us from God's love.

**Difficulty from opponents who argued with Stephen (6:8-10).** Though Stephen was appointed to an administrative office, it wasn't long before he showed his superb abilities in other areas. By the Spirit's power, Stephen was a good administrator (6:3), miracle worker (6:6), and evangelist (6:10). Stephen was immediately marked as a man of outstanding endowments and power. He was bearing witness to the messiahship of Jesus in the Jewish synagogues in Jerusalem. "The Freedmen" was a group of Jewish slaves who had been freed by Rome and had formed their own synagogue in Jerusalem. This group entered into a formal debate with Stephen about his ministry. When the Jews were unable to overcome this earnest leader because of his wisdom and the power of the Spirit, they resorted to deceit.

**Difficulty from opponents who lied about Stephen (6:13-15).** When Stephen was brought before the council of religious leaders, the accusation against him was the same that the leaders had used against Jesus. Stephen had apparently been teaching that the Jewish temple was no longer necessary for the true worship of God. He was now charged with teaching that Jesus would destroy the temple and do away with the practice of the law of Moses. This charge was not a pure falsehood, but a clever misrepresentation of what Stephen had actually taught. In the courtroom, all eyes were focused on Stephen, and Luke says that his face was like that of an angel. The description reminds us of the shining face of Moses when he came down from Mt. Sinai and the appearance of Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration.

**Stephen's vision of Christ (7:55-56).** Stephen was untroubled by the anger of the Sanhedrin. At this moment, God granted him a vision of the open heavens with the "Son of Man standing at his right hand." Stephen's words showed that indeed Jesus had now become the Son of Man at the right hand of God. Stephen's vision supported Jesus' claim and angered the Jewish leaders. They would not tolerate Stephen's words, so they set out to silence him.

**Difficulty of physical violence (7:57-58).** In a surge of blind, uncontrollable anger, the Sanhedrin killed Stephen. Stephen was led out of the city and stoned. In the method of stoning, the criminal was taken to a height and thrown down. If the fall killed the man, that was considered all right; if not, great boulders were hurled down upon him until he finally died.

Today, people may not kill us for witnessing about Christ, but they may try other ways to silence us. Keep honoring God in your conduct and words; though many may turn against you and your message, some will follow Christ. Remember, Stephen's death made a profound impact on Saul, who later became the world's greatest missionary, Paul.

**Stephen's response (7:59-60).** As Stephen died, he repeated Jesus' words on the cross (Luke 23:24). The early believers were glad to suffer as Jesus had suffered, because that meant they were counted worthy. Stephen was ready to suffer like Jesus, even to the point of asking forgiveness for his murderers. Such a forgiving response comes only from the Holy Spirit. The lesson to be learned here is that the man who follows Christ the whole way will find strength to do things which seem humanly impossible to do.

Our situation may not be as difficult as Stephen's, but no matter what our circumstance, we can know that Stephen's God is our God; Stephen's faith is our faith; the Holy Spirit dwells in us even as he did in Stephen; and we can enjoy the same tranquil peace that enveloped Stephen when our appointed hour shall come.

Russell is a member of First Church, Brandon.



# THE VILLAGE VIEW

The Baptist Children's Village

Ronny E. Robinson, Executive Director

P. O. Box 27,  
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## Gifts of Honor and Memory

A portion of The Village View is allocated each month to a list of Gifts of Honor and Memory. Many groups and individuals elect to pay tribute to others through this sensitive, meaningful and helpful medium. This feature is hopefully designed to further honor, with taste and respect, those who are and have been special to our special friends.

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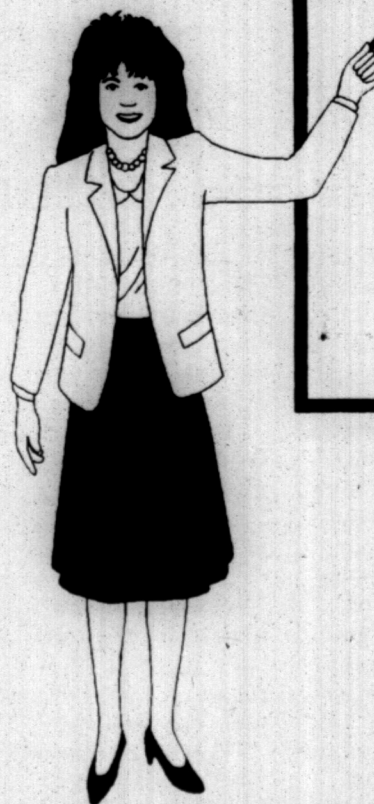
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Mr. and Mrs. Drew Jefcoat  
Belle Riddell  
Mr. & Mrs. Zach Taylor Jr.  
Lowry Ridgeway  
Mr. & Mrs. Freddie L. Jones  
Mr. and Mrs. Frank Wianowski  
Jerry M. Riley  
Comerstone SS, Temple BC  
Mr. Gene Ross  
Mr. & Mrs. D.L. Mauldin  
Wayne Robertson  
Herman, Sharon & Christopher  
Costs  
Hazel Robinson  
Mr. & Mrs. Glen King  
Mr. & Mrs. Morris McCaffrey  
Mrs. Hattie Ross  
Mrs. Beth G. Cupesid  
Mr. R.F. Runway, Sr.  
Mr. & Mrs. Homer Woodruff  
Hubert Sanders  
Mrs. Edwin B. Carpenter  
Mrs. Marine M. Cole  
H.T. Scarborough  
Mr. & Mrs. Clifton Mobley  
(to be continued)



The Baptist Children's Village  
Needs:

Nintendos  
Nintendo Games  
Furniture  
Pictures & Decorations for  
Cottages  
Kitchen Items



# capsules

**RTVC ANNOUNCES SPEAKER FOR JUNE 28-JULY 1 INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON COMMUNICATIONS MINISTRIES:** Ronnie Floyd, pastor of First Church, Springdale, Ark., will be the opening speaker for an International Conference on Communications Ministries (ICCM) scheduled June 28-July 1 at the Arlington Convention Center, Arlington, Texas, according to Radio and Television Commission executive Cade Garrison. "Floyd is an appropriate keynote speaker to exemplify the ICCM theme 'Through Closed Doors,'" said Garrison. "He has built a highly successful counseling response system as part of the Springdale church's 'Daystar' program seen on ACTS network." Floyd has recently been named by RTVC as successor to Richard Jackson as speaker on the long-running "Invitation to Life" evangelistic program seen on ACTS and FamilyNet.

**SBC COOPERATIVE PROGRAM GIFTS UP NEARLY 2.5% IN APRIL:** NASHVILLE (BP) — Cooperative Program receipts for April were up nearly 2.5% compared to the same month a year ago, according to Morris H. Chapman, president and chief executive officer of the SBC Executive Committee. April gifts totaled \$11,866,373, compared to \$11,588,093 in April 1992, a difference of \$278,279 or 2.4% increase. The 1992-93 SBC monthly basic operating budget requirement is \$11,683,366. The current year's SBC Cooperative Program Allocation Budget is \$140,200,395. The year-to-date totals for the Cooperative Program were almost identical compared to the same period a year ago: \$81,774,894 compared to \$81,788,995 or \$14,100 difference, .02%. The SBC fiscal year is Oct. 1 through Sept. 30.

**RICHMOND SEMINARY ADOPTS RESOLUTION SUPPORTING WOMEN:** RICHMOND, Va. (ABP) — The faculty of the Baptist Theological Seminary at Richmond has endorsed women as ordained ministers serving in Baptist churches. "At this moment in our history, Baptist women need to know of our affirmation of their calling, our respect for their ministry, our appreciation for their service, and our pledge to work with them in the many tasks of ministry," the faculty statement said. The resolution comes on the heels of comments by Albert Mohler, president-elect of Southern Seminary, that he and most other Southern Baptists are opposed to women serving in pastoral roles. Mohler, who will become president of Southern Baptists' oldest seminary Aug. 1, said women will be permitted to enroll in all seminary degree programs but should be told the Southern Baptist Convention discourages their service as pastors. The resolution from the moderate-backed Richmond seminary does not mention women pastors but affirms women in all church roles, "whatever that ministry may be."

**SLAVE CHILDREN RETURNED TO THEIR FAMILIES THROUGH WORK OF WIDOW'S FRIEND:** TILOK, Bangladesh (EP) — Last fall 17 children kidnapped from Bangladesh were found in Bombay, India, where they were to be sold into slavery as camel jockeys. Word of the plight of the children, found by Bombay police, reached Faith Willard, who directs a camp in the eastern United States and also directs the Widow's Friend, an agency helping meet the basic needs of people in Bangladesh. As a result of the publicity from that story, said Willard, two countries have now taken active steps to stop exploitation of children through slave "camel racing." The United Arab Emirates and Kuwait. According to Willard, 12 of the boys have been returned to their parents, and the others are staying at Home of Joy, an orphanage run by Widow's Friend. Willard hopes to raise up more children through their orphanage. "I would like to raise up an army of orphans who will reach Bangladesh with the gospel," said Willard.

## Despite grim stats, there is hope for families, says Home Life editor

By Lonnie Wilkey

NASHVILLE (BP) — The Ward and June Cleaver and Ozzie and Harriet Nelson "family types" are fast becoming a vanishing breed.

And, while those TV families of the 1950s and '60s perhaps were "too" perfect, they did represent the ideal American model of a single-income family with a working dad, stay-at-home mom, and children.

Statistics show, however, that today's family is far from the "ideal." In fact, according to Charlie Warren, the family unit is generally unhealthy.

Warren, editor of *Home Life* magazine published by the Baptist Sunday School Board, was interviewed in conjunction with the Christian Home emphasis observed in Southern Baptist churches between May 9 and June 20. He cited statistics which show "the family we have known in the past is no longer." Among those:

— Violent crimes have increased 560% since 1960.

— Illegitimate births have increased 400% in the past 30 years.

— The divorce rate has quadrupled and the percentage of children in single-parent homes has tripled since 1960.

— Only 15% of American households are single-income married couples with children under the age of 18.

— 1.6 million children in the United States today are the result of teen pregnancies.

— Half of today's children will not live with both of their parents during their teen years.

— Teen suicide has tripled in the last three decades, making it the third-leading cause of death among teens, behind traffic accidents and homicides.

"These are pretty alarming statistics," Warren admitted.

By the year 2000 futurists predict 75% of all mothers will work outside the home and the traditional family will make up less than 4% of the U.S. population, he added.

Warren called families today the

"not at home generation" and said it applies to Christian families as well as non-Christian families. Among churchgoers, he noted, "Mom and Dad often are at church committee meetings during the week."

Warren said there are things churches and families can do to make families stronger.

At *Home Life* "we find out what's right about families and uplift biblical ideals for families."

He noted churches can take healthy families and help them become healthier through different programs and emphases. Those emphases should be year-round, he added.

Something else families and churches must do to ensure healthy families is to emphasize sexual morality, Warren said. He noted statistics related to teen pregnancy are alarming because families have not done a good job of teaching morality.

He observed previous generations "did not teach sex education but they did teach morality."

"Now, families teach sex education but do not teach morality. It sends a message that sex outside marriage is OK. Christian families need to come down strong and say, 'It's not OK,'" he stressed.

The editor said the "most loving thing a parent can do for a child is

to love his or her spouse."

"If children see a good relationship between the husband and the wife, it gives them a sense of security and well-being," Warren said.

Churches can take a lead in helping to strengthen marriages which, in turn, strengthen families, he pointed out.

He cited materials produced by the BSSB which churches can use, such as Covenant Marriage materials, Fall Festival of Marriage seminars, and others. Churches can even have their own marriage seminars, Warren suggested. "We need to celebrate our healthy families. There are strong families; they are not all going down the tubes."

Churches also must adapt programs for the growing number of single-parent and blended families. "Do not condemn families who do not fit the traditional definition," he urged.

Despite the gloom and doom statistics, there is hope for the Christian family, Warren said. "I am seeing more and more emphasis on the family," he noted, predicting, "Churches will be on the cutting edge of society in helping families in their marriages and parenting skills."

Wilkey is associate editor, *Tennessee BAPTIST AND REFLECTOR*.

### Bibliocipher

By Charles Marx  
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COF KRZEZ COZSRIRF BLT, ZCQLOP, LW LZ SIL-  
WWRO, WRCW TCO ZBCAA OVW ALYR DQ DIRCF  
CAVOR, DEW DQ RYRIQ SVIF VX PVF.

AEMR XVEI: XVEI

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: Matthew Ten: Thirty-Two.



NASHVILLE — Country music entertainer Ricky Skaggs will participate in the Baptist Sunday School Board's agency report at the Southern Baptist Convention meeting in Houston.

## Country entertainer Ricky Skaggs is a man of God, family, and music

NASHVILLE (BP) — Country music entertainer Ricky Skaggs enjoys talking about God. A lot.

Matter of fact, he sometimes has to lasso his tongue on the subject because his country music cronies don't care much for his enthusiasm.

"What's hard is not running your mouth about it all the time. That's the challenge for me," Skaggs said when asked if being a Christian and an entertainer is difficult.

"Ricky's a zealot when he gets a hold of something," said Skaggs' wife, Sharon White, who also is a country music entertainer. "He just wants to take a ball bat and hit everybody over the head with it."

Said Skaggs: "A lot of my col-

leagues in the music world won't come to me with a problem 'cause they know I'm just going to lead them to Jesus. So I have to be careful. That's why God gives us a spirit of discernment."

But talking about his love for God and his family won't be a problem for Skaggs at the annual Southern Baptist Convention meeting in Houston.

Skaggs will be singing the cut, "My Father's Son," from his new release by the same name during the Baptist Sunday School Board's agency report at 7:50 p.m. Tuesday, June 15.

"I believe the family is where God's heart is. You know my family and my home life are the

deepest wells in my life besides the spiritual life of the Lord. Sharon and the kids keep a balance in my life like nothing else can do. How I relate to my family is how I see my relationship to the Lord."

A story about Skaggs is featured in a preview issue of the new *Home Life* magazine which will be distributed at the Southern Baptist Convention. The 45-year-old Christian family life magazine produced by the BSSB is being redesigned to offer up-to-date, relevant, and practical helps for the family.

The first 72-page issue of the new *Home Life* will be released in October of this year.

Baptist Record

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May 20, 1993

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